

Clever Diamond Thieves

How They Have Been Stirred
Into Activity by the Relief of
Kimberley.

Promptly upon the relief of Kimberley the affairs of the big diamond mining firms were straightened out and the mines put in touch with the markets of the world, just as promptly began the operations of the most ingenious thieves in the world. These are the diamond thieves of Kimberley.

Diamond stealing might almost be reckoned among the industries of South Africa. The stories connected with the business are many and thrilling. One day a prospector appeared at Kimberley. He wore boots fitted with Puritan heels two inches or more in height. A trifling matter of being seen talking very confidentially with a native woman directed attention to him.

His boot heels were hollow and filled with diamonds.

A man well known about Kimberley used to go to Europe three or four times a year. He always had a mag-



BRIDGE BUILDERS.
AILENTON. Great game with him. One night at a Kimberley club, while the master was playing billiards, his dog kept digging at his coat with his hind leg. On holding at the coat up a long slit was found in the dog's side sewed with silk. The threads were cut, and out dropped a diamond. When the dog's hair was shaved off, it was found that his body was literally covered with scars of incisions in which diamonds had been placed and snuggled out of the country.

The most dramatic incident was that of a man named Travers, who was well known as a successful "financer" of the diamond game, but could never be caught red-handed. He was a dapper character, and therefore when he left Kimberley with a large amount of valuable stones eight men were told off to bring him back. Starting at night, the pursuers galloped along through the hills of the daylight, which shuns down as swift like the drawing of a eagle's wing, and then on through the dark forms the youth, shifting out enter holes with sudden swerves which would dismount a masher, and then, with a short rest, forward again before the sun rose.

As the last flood of light blazed down far up they saw the man they sought, riding a very tired horse, maddening about from side to side, with his gun in the hollow of his arm, as if looking for game. When the pursuers were within about 50 yards, a yell was raised in front of him. He first took his reins and brought down the bird, looked it up to its saddle, and as the men came up, was loyally dropping two more cartridges into the chamber of his gun, casting the empty shells away. He was ordered to dismount and strip. The man went over every rag of his clothing, looking at the boot heels, the lining and crown of his hat, and open several of the cartridges in his belt, turned his hands, examined the sheathing, waded over horse and harness and finally laid by him go.

A few months later he died of a fever in England, and an old diamond broker in Cape Town said to one of his friends: "Ah, he was a great man! He leaves lots of money. Do you remember the time you chased him right down to the

desert, searched him and found nothing? He had over \$1,000,000 in stones with him then. He had the veins broken so that he shot as you rods up in a bag at his saddlebow. When he saw that you were bound to catch him, he released the bird, shot off both barrels as it flew and was caught as he was putting two new cartridges in his gun. You fellows looked everywhere but the right place. In the barrel of his gun were two cartridge cases, each at least a foot long, buried with diamonds."

Gifts of animals and natural history specimens to the various zoological gardens of the world from South Africa had to be practically discontinued because of the advantage taken by illicit diamond buyers to conceal stones in their hides and in the crops of feathered works. They even forced them down the throats of snakes.

The natives in the mines work naked to prevent them from carrying away stones, but even then it is impossible to stop robbery. Working with pick and shovel, a native breaks a piece of earth down which shows a stone somewhere in the break, and to secure this all his muscles are tensed. He changes his position for the next stroke, pins his foot over the diamond and, without losing time and attracting attention, picks it up with his toes and waits until he sees a chance to catch it in his hand and pass it to his mouth, ear or any part of his body which will hide it till he leaves the mine at night. If nothing else can be done, he swallows it. But these big, sharp-edged stones kill slow, and fatal ulceration is very common among the negroes, the cause of death being put down to fever until one day this problem was solved.

A well known case at the mines had two native servants, one of whom made money enough to retire and went up country to found a home by buying a wife. The remaining servant said on until one day a large and valuable diamond vanished.

Later his remaining native servant died, and later still word came from the married native that if the master waited to find his diamond he must find his dead servant. In the meantime his dead servant had been taken to the native cemetery, rolled up in a blanket or piece of cloth, and put into a shallow grave.

Going at night to the burial ground, the master dug up a few bodies and examined them for the missing stone. The result was startling. Next day he went to the head municipal officer of Kimberley and wanted to buy the cemetery. The officer at last learned that the servant had buried nine bodies the previous night and found diamonds in every one.

The officer convinced him that any attempt to utilize this discovery would cause a most serious rising among the natives. There the matter stopped.

JUGGLING WITH DEATH.

Bridge Builders Who Do Their Work at Dizzy Heights.

Almost any day in New York one may see workmen on the new East river bridge far in the air on slender pieces of steel perform what look like feats of the utmost daring. These are "superstructure men" and noted bridge-builders, of whom a number are employed upon the new structure.

The "dare-worx" on both ends of the new East river bridge has already reached a height of 150 feet. The steel work is now about 150 feet above the water. During the summer the main towers will be carried up to 300 feet without the girders.

The superstructure workers give daily performances far more wonderful

than the bridge-builders who do their work at dizzy heights.

Not all car conductors are merely hardened ringers in of fares. A poor woman got on a Twenty-third street cross-town car at Fourth avenue, and as it was well under way and she was about to hand her fare to the conductor she asked him if he transferred to Sixth avenue. On being told no, she drew back her 5 cents and asked to be let off.

"I've a long ways to go on Sixth avenue," she said, "and I'd better walk to there and then ride."

The car then had reached Madison avenue.

"Wait till we get across the street," answered the conductor. She waited, and instead of stopping there to let the car go on, paid the transfer station and across Broadway to Sixth avenue. There he pulled the bell and looked at her.

"Thank you," she said gratefully.

He had carried her within a block of where she wanted to go and had taken no fare.—New York Telegram.

More Than He Could Stand.

"What's this?" demanded the police, hurrying to the scene. "A hold up?"

A pale, scholarly-looking man in spectacles was swishing over a hasty run and shaking his slender fist at the policeman.

"I presume that is what you would term it," he replied. "This fellow stopped me just now and ordered me to hold up my hands. I complied, and he began to search my pockets. 'I will give you a bullet through your eye,' he said, 'if you take them down at during the time I am.' And then I knocked him down. 'All during' is an abominable perversion of correct English that no man can utter in my presence unashamed."

The unlucky footpad had tackled a professor of rhetoric.—Chicago Tribune.

And He Knows.

"Algerian is very interesting," said the stockholder's daughter.

"What does he talk about?" inquired her father.

"Why, he's ever so well posted in Shakespearean quotations."

"Young woman," said the financier sternly, "don't you let him distract you. Don't let him talk apart of your ignorance. There isn't no such stock on the market."—London Standard.

How Dan Rice Played It.

To Dan Rice the people of Lewiston are indebted for their own chief.

He exhibited his acts in this town in the winter without a dinner and the next day was arrested at McWayne.

He was ordered to dismount and strip.

The men went over every rag of his clothing, looking at the boot heels, the lining and crown of his hat, and open several of the cartridges in his belt.

He was ordered to do so, and he kept his promise faithfully.—Lewiston Daily Free Press.

There is no end **of the** **absurdities** **of the** **so-called** **superstructure** **work** **on** **the** **El Paso** **&** **Northeastern** **Railroad.**

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